



J.E. COSGRIFF MEMORIAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL
St. Ambrose Church

February 8, 2020

The Honorable E. Richard Webber
111 S. 10th St. Suite 8. 182
St. Louis MO 63102

Dear Judge Webber,

I am writing on behalf of Mr. John Rallo who is scheduled to appear before you early next month. I met Mr. Rallo and his wife three years ago as they were very interested in their two children attending the school where I serve as academic Principal. The children were accepted and now attend J.E. Cosgriff Memorial Catholic School.

Mr. Rallo has so kindly and with much interest volunteered his time in several student, parent, community service activities including recess duty, library check out, classroom editing, and drama stage assistant to name a few. He is genuinely invested in the education of his son, John and daughter, Johanna and goes the extra mile to support their education and character formation in and outside of school.

Mr. Rallo assists in coaching his children in sports or sits nervously on the sideline cheering them on. He has not missed a parent teacher conference, science night, school play, class project presentation etc. Mr. Rallo is a father who makes himself available and present for his family. He and his wife, Jaimie have also made a concerted effort to provide and decorate the church for special church holy days.

My professional work for the past twenty-five years has been an elementary, middle school principal in the public and parochial school system. Before my tenure as a school administrator, I taught special education in the public school system in a lower socioeconomic setting.

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Over the years, I have learned that there is a very sad but common thread with a students who performs poorly in school, who are habitually tardy or absent, and stand out because of behavioral and emotional issues. The thread is the lack of a supportive and caring adult(s) in their lives. We need more grandparents, coaches, teachers and parents who are physically present and invested for the long haul. These VIP's must have high but realistic expectations for our precious children and believe there is no substitute for quality time spent with a child, or grandchild.

Year after year as a teacher and administrator, the same themes are prevalent with single parents and often two parent families. I am of the belief that children develop self-confidence, independence and positive self-worth when a parent expresses sincere interest and stands by them.

In place of possible incarceration, I firmly believe that Mr. John Rallo's time would be much better served by working with our troubled, at risk youth of today. The young people who spend several hours per week after school and on week-ends at the Boys and Girls Club, Shelter kids, Children's Service Society, Family Support etc. These young people would greatly benefit from a positive mentor with homework, sports, and a listening ear. The greatest gift that can be given to another person is ones time and attention. In addition, Mr. Rallo is needed by his own two children for his love and guidance.

If John Rallo must make retribution for a poor decision or past mistake, I hope and pray that he will be able to serve his time by helping earth's most precious resource—our children.

Sincerely,



Betsy Hunt, Principal
J.E.Cosgriff Memorial Catholic School

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